

**CITY OF PHILADELPHIA  
OFFICE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR'S DIRECTIVE 63**

**USE OF EXTERIOR CLOSED-CIRCUIT TELEVISION CAMERAS**

**Issued December 15, 2023**

**I. AUTHORITY**

This Directive is established pursuant to 53 Pa. C.S. §13131 (relating to Cities of the First Class Home Rule General Grant of Powers); Philadelphia City Charter Article I §1-100 (relating to City Powers Defined); Philadelphia City Charter Article V §5-200 (relating to the Powers of the Police Department); and Philadelphia City Charter Article VIII §8-501 (relating to Surveillance Cameras to Prevent Crime and Violence).

**II. APPLICABILITY**

This Directive applies to all CCTV or surveillance cameras owned, operated, or controlled by the City on the exterior of City buildings or in the public rights of way, and the authorized personnel who operate the cameras.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

- a. Authorized personnel – City employees who are granted access to CCTV cameras, video feeds, video images, or any other aspect of the City's CCTV camera system by the owning agency as it pertains to data, systems, and infrastructure.
- b. CCTV Camera – A closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera that captures and records video footage of a specific area or location. The camera is designed to be connected to a closed circuit, meaning the video signals are transmitted to a limited set of monitors or recording devices, rather than being publicly broadcast.
- c. Exterior CCTV Camera – A CCTV camera installed on any of the following: traffic poles; light poles; building exteriors; or otherwise on City property external to a building or structure. Exterior CCTV cameras do not capture footage of the interior of City buildings.
- d. Law enforcement officers – Sworn officers of PPD and sworn personnel of state and federal law enforcement agencies, as authorized by PPD.
- e. OIT – The City of Philadelphia's Office of Innovation and Technology.

- f. Owning agency – The City department that owns the Exterior CCTV camera and is responsible for the procurement, maintenance, configuration, and reliable operation of the video system and cameras. The owning agency seeks to ensure the uptime, performance, resources, and security of the camera systems they manage meet the needs of their users, without excessively impacting any enterprise resources.
- g. PPD – The Philadelphia Police Department.
- h. Streets – The Philadelphia Streets Department.
- i. Surveillance cameras – An Exterior CCTV Camera that primarily monitors public rights-of-way, gathers information, or observes a larger area for public safety purposes to aid in the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of criminal activity, civil violations, and asset management concerns.
- j. Video feeds – Live or recorded video images from an exterior camera that is continuously transmitted or made available for viewing.
- k. Video images – Video or still images, captured by Exterior CCTV cameras.
- l. VSS Governance Group – A group comprised of representatives of relevant departments, as selected by the Managing Director, but which at all times must include representatives from OIT, PPD, and Streets.
- m. VSS Network – Video Surveillance System (VSS) network infrastructure and ancillary equipment.

#### **IV. PURPOSE & GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

##### *A. Goals of the program*

The City of Philadelphia operates Exterior CCTV Cameras to monitor and enhance the safety and security of City property and public rights-of-way for the following purposes:

- to deter crime;
- to protect residents and business communities in the city;
- to improve quality of life for neighborhood residents;
- to provide a resource for law enforcement investigators tasked with solving crimes and City Code violations;
- to aid prosecutors in seeking conviction of criminal offenders; and
- to enhance existing Homeland Security efforts to protect the City of Philadelphia to support the delivery of City services.

### *B. Right to privacy*

Exterior CCTV Cameras shall at all times be used in a manner that respects the civil rights and civil liberties of Philadelphia residents and visitors, appropriately balances the interests of public safety and individual privacy, and complies with the Pennsylvania and United States Constitutions and all applicable laws and regulations.

### *C. Integrated system*

PPD is only able to monitor Exterior CCTV Cameras that are integrated into the VSS Network. Therefore, whenever feasible, Exterior CCTV Cameras must be compatible with the City's VSS Network infrastructure and video management systems. If an owning agency is planning to cause any Exterior CCTV camera (whether new or existing) to not be compatible with the VSS Network, that agency must submit documentation to OIT outlining the reasons that compatibility with the VSS Network is not feasible.

## **V. PROCUREMENT**

When purchasing any new Exterior CCTV Camera, all City of Philadelphia departments and/or programs must adhere to the City's Procurement guidelines.<sup>1</sup>

## **VI. INSTALLATION & REMOVAL**

### *A. Location, placement, and installation of new cameras*

Except for Streets, all requests for new Exterior CCTV Cameras must receive prior approval from PPD. PPD shall establish the policies and procedures for approving or denying these requests.

Prior to the installation of any Exterior CCTV Camera, the using agency must work with OIT to complete a pre-proposal infrastructure capabilities site visit, per OIT procedure.<sup>2</sup>

### *B. Disabling cameras*

OIT is authorized to immediately remotely disable any Exterior CCTV Camera that violates this Directive, the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act § 889 ([Pub. Law 115-232](#)), or any other relevant local, state, or federal law or regulation.

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<sup>1</sup> As of the time of issuance of this Directive, the Procurement guidelines can be located on [OIT's SharePoint](#).

<sup>2</sup> As of the time of issuance of this Directive, these procedures can be located on [OIT's SharePoint](#).

OIT will notify the VSS Governance Group that a camera has been remotely disabled by the close of the next business day.

*C. Removing cameras*

Each owning agency may remove an Exterior CCTV Camera it owns at its discretion. Owning agencies may also request that OIT assist with camera removal; however, it shall be at OIT's discretion whether to provide such assistance and in what manner.

*D. Regular reevaluation of camera placement*

It is encouraged that each owning agency regularly reevaluate the placement of each of its Exterior CCTV Cameras. To best protect residents' privacy, the owning agency shall remove or request the removal (per § VI.C of this Directive) of any cameras which are no longer operationally necessary.

The Managing Director's Office, through the VSS Governance Group, has the authority to review the placement of any Exterior CCTV Camera. Upon review, the VSS Governance Group may recommend or require the removal of any Exterior CCTV Camera it determines is no longer operationally necessary.

**VII. OPERATION OF CCTV CAMERAS**

*A. Administration*

Each agency's Commissioner (or their designee shall) establish the positions that are necessary in accordance with this Directive to oversee all Exterior CCTV Cameras owned by that agency, and any other responsibilities outlined in this Directive, and determine the responsibilities of and qualifications for each position. Those positions may include, but are not limited to, Exterior CCTV Camera operator positions and supervisory positions.

The City of Philadelphia Chief Information Officer (or their designee) shall establish the technical positions that are necessary to support and maintain Exterior CCTV Cameras, infrastructure, and data storage. This includes, but is not limited to, installing, relocating, or removing Exterior CCTV Cameras and associated equipment for this program.

*B. Authorized personnel*

All authorized personnel operating or having access to Exterior CCTV Camera equipment, video feeds, video images, other data, or any other aspect of the VSS network must be trained by their employer agency in the procedures required and conduct prohibited under this Directive and applicable law, and in the appropriate uses of Exterior CCTV Cameras. All such personnel shall

receive a copy of this Directive and shall acknowledge in writing that they have read and understood the Directive prior to engaging in any activity relating to Exterior CCTV Cameras, video feeds, video images, other data, or any other aspect of the VSS network.

### *C. Recording*

All Exterior CCTV Cameras that are part of the VSS Network shall be set to record video footage continuously, capturing all activities within the surveillance area, regardless of the time of day, to provide a comprehensive record of events that can be useful for investigations or reviewing incidents that occur at any time, as well as to enable real-time monitoring of the surveillance area.

### *D. Storage*

All video images must be stored using a secure means that provides for controlled access (by password or similar secure means) and automatically records instances of access, including, but not necessarily limited to, date, time, user, and images accessed.

### *E. Accessing and Viewing*

#### 1. Security requirements

Video feeds and stored images shall be monitored and viewed only in secure locations such that images and information provided by the cameras are visible only to authorized personnel identified by the Commissioner (or their designee), or in the field by law enforcement officers under circumstances that reasonably prevent viewing by unauthorized persons. Video images shall be transmitted to and from the Exterior CCTV Cameras and any CCTV Camera Centers only by secure methods.

#### 2. Non-disclosure

All persons with access to live or stored video images created by an Exterior CCTV Camera shall maintain the images in the strictest confidence, and shall not duplicate, release, disclose, disseminate, or distribute any such image, in any form or by any means, except as provided in § VII.G of this Directive.

#### 3. Break-fix access

Other restrictions notwithstanding, OIT shall have the right to access and view any camera's live video feed for the purposes of troubleshooting and repair.

### *F. Reporting*

All owning agencies must report all violations, or suspected violations, of this Directive to the VSS Governance Group in addition to any other agency reporting processes.

### *G. Dissemination*

Video images and other information obtained by use of Exterior CCTV Cameras shall only be duplicated, released, disclosed, or disseminated, and/or distributed in accordance with this Directive for the purposes of criminal investigation or prosecution (including but not limited to use as evidence), civil enforcement, asset protection, or as otherwise required by law or valid court order.

The Police Commissioner or their designee shall establish procedures governing requests for and release of stored video images. Any such procedures shall be subject to the restrictions in this Directive. The procedures shall include, at minimum:

- a request form, a log, or other means for recording the images released and the recipient;
- a procedure for authorizing requesting persons to receive stored video images (including the designation of persons who can authorize release); and
- an expedited release process for emergency requests.

Only copies of video images shall be released; in no event shall original video images be released or removed from the storage facility unless required by law.

Only authorized personnel shall be permitted access to stored video images. Video images shall not be duplicated in any form or by any means except as directed by the Police Commissioner or their designee to ensure the integrity of the stored images.

### *H. Retention*

Video images shall not be retained for more than a period of 30 days, unless necessary for an ongoing investigation or enforcement action, or otherwise required to be preserved by valid court order or subpoena.

### *I. Prohibited activities*

Exterior CCTV Cameras shall not be used to monitor any person based on a person's race, gender, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, religious or political affiliation or activity, or any other classification protected by law.

Exterior CCTV Cameras shall not be operated in a manner that interferes with an individual's reasonable expectation of privacy.

Exterior CCTV Cameras shall not be used to monitor, record, listen to, or acquire the contents of any oral communication made by any person.

To minimize the risk of disclosure of security sensitive or otherwise confidential information or compromise of an investigation, authorized personnel shall not speak publicly or to the press about the City's CCTV cameras or the VSS Network, their capabilities, their activities, or any other aspect of the program without consent of the Managing Director or their designee. This includes requiring approval from the Managing Director or their designee for the release of any program documentation to any person who does not qualify as "authorized personnel" pursuant to this Directive.

#### **VIII. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

The Police Commissioner or their designee shall establish procedures for the review and disposition of complaints submitted by residents regarding the use of Exterior CCTV Cameras, the unauthorized release of any images, or any complaints received by individuals impacted by the quality and/or integrity of camera footage or images.

#### **IX. PENALTY FOR VIOLATIONS**

City personnel found violating any of the provisions of this Directive shall be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

#### **X. LEGAL INTERPRETATIONS**

The determination of the City of Philadelphia Law Department shall be obtained and followed in the event of any question regarding the interpretation or application of this Directive.



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Tumar Alexander, Managing Director

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12/15/2023  
Date